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National Agricultural Statistics Service



News Release

Cooperating with the Montana Department of Agriculture
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May 1, 2011 Crop Production Forecast

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Based on May 1 conditions, Montana winter wheat producers expect a yield of 44 bushels per acre, 4 bushels below last year's final yield, according to USDA, National Agricultural Statistics Service, Montana Field Office. Total production is expected to be 94.6 million bushels, up 1 percent from last year's 93.6 million bushels. In the fall of 2010, Montana producers seeded 2.3 million acres of winter wheat, up 250,000 acres from the previous year. Producers expect to harvest 2.15 million acres, 200,000 acres above 2010.

As of May 8, Montana's winter wheat crop condition was rated slightly above a year ago with 1 percent very poor, 6 percent poor, 24 percent fair, 56 percent good, and 13 percent excellent, compared with 1 percent very poor, 6 percent poor, 31 percent fair, 50 percent good, and 12 percent excellent last year. Warmer weather is needed this spring for crop development as 1 percent of the acreage has reached the boot stage compared with 4 percent last year.

On May 1, Montana hay producers stored 1,300,000 tons of hay on hand, compared with 720,000 tons on hand a year ago. Hay production for 2010 was 6.1 million tons, 28 percent higher than 2009 production. Disappearance from December 1, 2010 to May 1, 2011 is a record 4.2 million tons, up 24 percent from the same period a year earlier.

United States winter wheat production is forecast at 1.42 billion bushels, down 4 percent from 2010. Based on May 1 conditions, yield is forecast at 44.5 bushels per acre, down 2.3 bushels from the previous year. Expected grain area totals 32.0 million acres, up 1 percent from last year. As of May 1, 34 percent of the United States winter wheat crop was rated in good to excellent condition, 34 points below the same week in 2010. Heading reached 33 percent in the 18 major producing States, 4 percentage points ahead of the 5-year average.

All hay stored on U.S. farms May 1, 2011 totaled 22.2 million tons, up 6 percent from a year ago. Disappearance from December 1, 2010-May 1, 2011 totaled 79.9 million tons, compared with 86.3 million tons for the same period a year ago. Compared with last year, hay stocks increased across much of the Nation's midsection. In many cases, these increases are attributed to an increase in total hay production in 2010.

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